

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

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INFO DIA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

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C O N F I D E N T I A L JAKARTA 15918

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PINS ID PO

HT AS

SUBJECT: PORTUGUESE TIMOR (PT) BATTLEFIELD SITUATION

AT YEAR-END; AILEU AND ATAURO CAPTURED

REF: JAKARTA 15818 (290945Z DEC 75)

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BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. JAKARTA PRESS DEC. 31 REPORTS FALL OF FRETILIN STRONGHOLD OF AILEU TO PRO-INDONESIAN FORCES MORNING DEC. 29. REPORTS STATE FRETILIN AMMUNITION AND LOGISTICS GODOWNS SEIZED.

2. SAME REPORTS STATE THAT POPULATION OF ATAURO ISLAND DEC. 28 DECLARED INTEGRATION WITH PRO-INDONESIAN EAST TIMOR "PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT". ATAURO ISLAND, APPROX 15 MILES OFF TIMOR COAST OPPOSITE DILI, WAS BASE OF RESIDUAL PORTUGUESE PRESENCE IN PT FOLLOWING GOP WITHDRAWAL FROM DILI AFTER OUTBREAK OF VIOLENCE IN AUGUST. END UNCLASSIFIED.

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3. VARIOUS LOCAL SOURCES HAVE REPORTED THAT ATAURO WAS TAKEN BY PRO-INDONESIAN FORCES PRIOR TO ANNOUNCEMENT OF INTEGRATION DECISION. TROOPS REPORTEDLY ENCOUNTERED NO RESISTANCE ON ATAURO, FROM WHICH LAST PORTUGUESE PERSONNEL HAD BEEN WITHDRAWN BY PORTUGUESE NAVAL VESSELS SEVERAL DAYS PREVIOUSLY.

4. LOCAL SOURCES ALSO REPORT PRO-INDONESIAN UNITY IS CURRENTLY MOVING ON SOUTH COAST TOWN OF SUAI (APPROX 15 MILES FROM INDONESIAN BORDER), AND THAT CAPTURE OF SUAI IS NEXT MAJOR OBJECTIVE FOLLOWING FALL OF AILEU.

5. COMMENT: WITH FALL OF AILEU AND PROSPECTIVE FALL OF SUAI, PRIMARY AREA OF FRETILIN CONTROL NOW REDUCED TO BOBONARO-ERMERA-MAUBISSE TRIANGLE IN CENTER OF ISLAND SOUTHWEST OF DILI. AREA CONTAINS SUBSTANTIAL POPULATION AS WELL AS MOUNTAINOUS TERRAIN WHICH COULD PROVIDE BASE FOR PROLONGED GUERRILLA-TYPE RESISTANCE IF RPT IF FRETILIN MORALE AND SUPPLIES SHOLD UP. SIMILAR RESISTANCE ALSO POSSIBLE ON PART OF SCATTERED FRETILIN UNITS ELSEWHERE IN SOUTHERN AND EASTERN AREAS OF TIMOR INTO WHICH PRO-INDONESIAN FORCES HAVE NOT YET SIGNIFICANTLY PENETRATED. UNLIKELY, HOWEVER, THAT FRETILIN WOULD BE ABLE TO MOUNT
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STRONG RESISTANCE TO FURTHER CONCERTED PRO-INDONESIAN ATTACKS ON POPULATION CENTERS AND MAJOR TRANSPORTATION ROUTES.
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